

VZCZCXRO9766
OO RUEHPT
DE RUEHBY #1107 3050734
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 310734Z OCT 08
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0457
INFO RUEHBN/AMCONSUL MELBOURNE PRIORITY 5734
RUEHPT/AMCONSUL PERTH PRIORITY 4006
RUEHDN/AMCONSUL SYDNEY PRIORITY 3944

UNCLAS CANBERRA 001107

SIPDIS

FOR G/IWI AND EAP

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KWMN](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KPAO](#) [AS](#)

SUBJECT: AUSTRALIA 2009 INTERNATIONAL WOMEN OF COURAGE
NOMINATION

REF: STATE 099729

¶1. Embassy Canberra is pleased to nominate June Oscar for the 2009 Secretary's Award for International Women of Courage. In response to hard-hitting reports of abuse in Aboriginal communities in Australia, Ms. Oscar successfully campaigned for a controversial six-month ban on take-away alcohol sales in an effort to address the violence and associated health and social problems linked to alcohol abuse. As the CEO of the Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre and leader of this campaign, she often met with strong opposition. The alcohol ban, which has gained the support of Aboriginal elders, has led to a dramatic reduction of 43 percent in reports of domestic violence and an estimated 55 percent reduction in police call-outs for alcohol-fueled incidents. School attendance and engagement has also increased as a result of her successful take-away alcohol ban campaign.

¶2. Nomination details:

Name: June Oscar

Job title/association: CEO, Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre

Date of birth: 21 April 1962

Country of birth: Australia

Citizenship: Australian

Address: U295A Saddler Place, Fitzroy Crossing, WA (Western Australia) 6765

Telephone: 61 418 905 488

E-mail: joscar@tpg.com.au

Passport number: to follow

¶3. Justification:

Family violence and sexual assault are reported to be at crisis levels in many Indigenous communities. While abuse is not an Aboriginal-only problem, the combined effects of poor health, alcohol and drug abuse, unemployment, gambling, pornography, poor education and housing and a general loss of identity and control have contributed to a rise in domestic violence and abuse in their communities. In response to calls from Indigenous people for change, a number of federal, state and territory governments have established Task Forces, drafted policy documents, and held inquiries into the nature and extent of the violence. Ms. June Oscar, has not waited for the government to come to the aid of her community. Rather, she has moved forward, against strong opposition,

with efforts that have had a real, measurable impact on reducing violence towards women and children.

Ms. Oscar, and her colleagues from the Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre, successfully campaigned in the Kimberley town of Fitzroy Crossing for a six-month ban on take-away alcohol sales, other than low-strength beer. Ms Oscar, who is the Centre's CEO, led this campaign in an effort to address the violence and associated health and social problems linked to alcohol abuse. She has met in some cases with strong opposition. The alcohol ban, which is now supported by Aboriginal elders, has led to a 43 percent reduction in reports of domestic violence and a 55 percent reduction in calls to the police on alcohol-related violent incidents. School officials report attendance is up and children and parents are more engaged. The Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre operates an accommodation service for victims of domestic violence with emergency short term and transitional accommodation for women and children escaping domestic violence.

This nomination supports the President's Freedom Agenda by highlighting an effort focused on fighting hunger and disease and supporting basic education initiatives. Ms. Oscar's work highlights the Australian government's interest in closing the gap between the living standard of indigenous and non-indigenous citizens.

14. Embassy contact: Pol Andrea Appell, telephone 61 2 6214
Q4. Embassy contact: Pol Andrea Appell, telephone 61 2 6214
5833 appella@state.gov

McCallum